

The Catholic Record.

"Christianus mihi nomen est, Catholicus vero Cognomen."—(Christian is my Name, but Catholic my Surname).—St. Pacian, 4th Century.

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The Catholic Record.

London Saturday, January 14, 1899.

AN INSTANCE.

The Ave Maria calls attention to a certain Mr. Hyde who was sent out by the American Bible Society to spy out the Philippines. His report would shame a Munchausen. Despite the testimony of General Merritt and Hon. John Barrett to the noble character of the Spanish priests and their labors for civilization, this individual has the effrontery to tell us that they are "grossly immoral, opposed to education, and doing all in their power to demoralize the natives." A lie cleverly told will always find believers, but the story of Mr. Hyde will be laughed at by anybody who has the slightest pretension to common sense. He is indeed an exception to the rule that children and fools cannot lie.

If Mr. Hyde is a specimen of the missionary for the Philippines, then God help the natives.

Perhaps the Bible Society will apologize for the utterances of its envoy. We do not expect anything of the kind from Mr. Hyde, for we believe that any individual guilty of such wholesale calumny must have some radical defect in his moral and mental machinery—that he is not, in fact, a responsible being. Here is where Rev. Mr. Blagden's scheme for imprisoning defamers, etc., would be of practical value.

A SIMPLER CATECHISM.

Our remarks on a simpler Catechism have been endorsed by a great many of our readers. Butler's will, of course, be always a classic, but it is to our mind altogether unfitted for pupils of the lower grades. Take for instance the 3rd chapter on the Apostles Creed. That chapter is very important, dealing, as it does, with "the principal mysteries of religion and the reason for belief in them." But what idea will a child have of "explicitly believed," "the homage of our understanding," etc.? He will repeat the words parrot-like, but the sense and significance of them will be lost to him. The big words and complex sentences make the study of Catechism a drudgery instead of a pleasure or a something that should be made as fascinating to the young as a fairy tale. Much can be done by competent teachers, but such are, we are forced to admit, in small number in any parish. Even they who have knowledge of their faith are loth to undertake the task of instructing others. They prefer their ease to the work of extending God's kingdom on earth—and they are the ones who comment on the shortcomings of our boys and young men! They are our censors, but not helpers; they are too busily employed in burning incense before their pitiable selves, to heed the wants of their brethren; they are counting the dollars which they devote to show and extravagance, but which are withheld from any society or organization that is trying to educate and to save souls. And so we say that it is a difficult task for many pastors to secure intelligent teachers for the Sunday-school. Why not then have a Catechism short and simple for beginners. We have no hesitation in saying that it would be welcomed gladly by pastors all over the country. The children would take an interest in its study, because it would have a meaning for them.

We should be pleased to publish any communication on this subject.

We have already heard a priest say that our remarks "stated his experience for nearly twenty years."

TRUE UNITY.

The Westminster publishes in a recent issue a synopsis of an address delivered by Rev. Dr. Gibson on the necessity of union between the "Free Sects" and the Evangelical party, so as to have a barrier against the waves which are bearing England to Rome. England is fast becoming a slave to Rome! So they say in effect, but we think that it is but returning to the faith of which it has been despoiled and to the Church which cradled and taught it years before the "Free Sects" were born.

A Catholic smiles at the opposition that intends to stay the progress of truth. He knows whose vessel he has entered; it is the bark of Peter.

When the greatest of the Romans was in an open boat on the Adriatic and the sea rose, he said to the terrified boatman: "Caesar is your freight and Caesar's fortune." What he said in presumption we can repeat in faith of that boat in which Christ once sat and preached. "We do not need you, but you need us; it is not we who shall be baffled if we cannot gain you, but you who will come short, if you be not gained." So spoke Cardinal Newman, who bent himself in the early days to the task of destroying Catholicity, but lived to see its truth and to become its great champion. And he was not disappointed: "I have followed His guidance, and He has not disappointed me. I have put myself into His hands, and He has given me what I sought." Many a convert can repeat the same words. Weary with futile questioning of fallible teachers, they come at last to the Church which alone has the commission to teach and to guide men to eternity.

But what would be the bond of union between the Free Sects and the Evangelical party? Are they all prepared to accept a common creed? What authority have they to determine that creed? Supposing that they elect a Moderator and agree to accept his rulings, would he have the authority to demand interior belief? But they stand on the Bible as a common platform. If the Bible creates to-day such a wide divergence between the sects and the Evangelicals how will it keep them united in the future?

"PLAIN REASONS."

Dr. Littledale's "Plain Reasons" has in its own way been the means of leading some of our separated brethren to the haven of Catholicity. It was published for the purpose of exposing the errors of Rome, but, it is needless to say, has signally failed in its purpose. Were it written in calm and judicial spirit it might have a measure of influence; but its unfair methods, quotation-garbling and downright calumnies have discredited it even amongst Anglicans, and have made it simply a monument to the unscrupulous mendacity of the rev. author.

Dr. Lee, writing to the Tablet, declares that the work is mercilessly unfair and altogether untrustworthy, and counts within its pages—and they are not many—201 errors. The writer has no respect for history or dogma or the Fathers. He misrepresents the doctrines of the Church and does not scruple to indulge in the most shameless and reckless falsification that has ever come under our notice.

Dr. Mossman, of Torrington, Lincolnshire, in 1881, wrote thus: "The book appears to me written in the most reprehensible spirit. Unless exposed and refuted it is calculated to do grievous harm to the blessed and holy cause of corporate reunion. The book cannot of course mislead anyone who is acquainted with ecclesiastical history and dogmatic theology, but how very few of its readers will know that it is little more than a rude congeries of fallacies and erroneous statements, taken at second hand, which have been exposed and refuted again and again."

We cite these words to show what Anglicans think of "Plain Reasons." Why an Anglican minister should recommend its perusal to an individual, who is casting about for the truth, passes our comprehension. We know for a fact, however, that a clergyman of one of our fashionable parishes advised a member of his flock to seek light and peace in the pages of "Plain Reasons." His request was complied with, and an infidel was the result. The cynicism and falsehood despoiled that person of everything that stood for religion, and cast him into unbelief. He is now a Catholic, looking at the Bride of Christ as she is, and not as the foul imagination of Littledale would have her.

A FAKE STORY.

Father Walsh, of Chicago, Absolutely Denies a Story About Joining the Knights of Pythias.

One of the biggest fakes ever known in the ecclesiastical fake news business was worked last Friday in Chicago. It is a good instance of the way these stories are worked up.

On Friday the Chicago papers came out with the statement that Father F. J. Walsh, of that city, had made application and had been admitted to membership in the Knights of Pythias. It further stated that Father Walsh had admitted this fact and that he would endeavor to secure Archbishop Feehan's approval. It wound up by stating that Father Walsh was a close friend of Archbishop Ireland. Then followed considerable padding about the change of attitude on part of the Church toward secret societies, with

diverse animadversions on the triumph of the liberal school in the Church.

Now comes Father Walsh and states that the entire story is absolutely false. "The story is absurd. Were it not so ridiculous I would be more incensed, but as it stands I am done a grievous wrong. The story is manufactured out of whole cloth, and an ample apology must be made or I will take legal steps against the newspapers which published the falsehood."

It appears that some unauthorized persons bandied in the name and the Pythians are looking for the man who did it.

THE BLESSED VIRGIN AND THE "HIGHER CRITICS."

Eloquent Discourse by Rev. Dr. De Costa.

New York Freeman's Journal.

On Sunday, January 1, in the Protestant Episcopal Church of St. John the Evangelist, New York city, Rev. B. F. De Costa, D. D., delivered an eloquent discourse on the Blessed Virgin, in which he ably vindicated the doctrine of the Church in relation to the Mother of our Saviour, as against the infidel contentions of the current "higher criticism." Taking as his text "Joseph was minded to put her away privily," the rev. doctor said: "The voice of scandal is one of the voices of the ages. Scandal falls upon greedy ears and finds a ready market. The fast presses of a type of journalism are now all too slow to meet the eager demand. Of old, in Nazareth, scandal filled a recognized want, even as in our day, when families high and low and whole communities are canvassed by salaried inquisitors in search of domestic infelicities and misfortunes. Hard, sorry facts in the simple annals of the poor, even, are utilized and exhibited to the world by the aid of the reportorial searchlight for the edification of the vultures of society, who, with a keen relish, seize upon the daily dish of moral rot."

CHRISTIANITY DOES NOT FEAR CRITICISM.

Our brief text pours a flood of light upon the condition of the little unsavory, turbulent Galilean town, equally ready for revolution or divorce. In this town the modest Virgin Mary chanced to live, but one day she fled in haste to Ain Karim, the home of Elizabeth, in the hill country of Judea, where the tongue of the traducer could do her no harm. The Church once more, in the Gospel for the day, brings to our attention facts connected with her history and the Incarnation and Birth of Christ. Christianity fears which she will never descend, and the increase of Bible reading and study will simply remove false ideas and increase the honor that she now receives. More and more will she command the love and admiration of those who faithfully recognize her Son as the Son of God.

Still we read, and scoffers gloat over the statement, that Joseph, the simple-minded man, was moved to repudiate her and put her away privily. Would that the "higher critic," so called, were equally simple minded and anxious to avoid scandal. Unfortunately, he is not an Israelite without guile, but a very different character, and is now joining hands with Protestant infidels in the effort to put Mary away publicly. This kind of critic has a secure place and enjoys favor and patronage among the various denominations, including the Episcopal Church, fast becoming a kind of Cave of Adullam.

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quered. Naturally, however, Mary, notwithstanding the Annunciation by the Angel, hastened away from Nazareth. Yet she, likewise, rose superior at last, and, fully conscious of her sinless purity, poured out her rare soul in the sublime strains of the "Magnificat." Hers was the greatest trial that a pure woman was ever called to meet, and she proved the greatness and nobility of her nature by the manner in which, under suspicion, she endured the tremendous strain. It was her absolute innocence, her stainless purity, that furnished the main source of her strength, recalling the words of the laureate: "My strength is as the strength of ten, because my heart is pure." She accepted the situation, and, in the spirit of faith and sacrifice, said: "Be it unto me according to thy word." In accepting the high mission, she showed the greatness of her soul. Yet all Christians, even, do not appreciate the significance of her mission, comprehend the part that she performed in the redemption of mankind or attempt to realize the immaculate purity that must invest the soul of one appointed to be the Mother of a Sinless Redeemer.

NOT ONLY THE GREATEST WOMAN, BUT THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON THAT EVER CAME IN TOUCH WITH HUMAN HISTORY.

But innocence always prevails, and thus Mary triumphed. The great truth became apparent. Criticism was silenced, and as the generations rolled on her honor grew, millions rising up to call her blessed. At least no terms were found too regal to describe her character. After the Eternal Son of God, Mary, the once defamed Hebrew maiden of a town itself scandalous in character, stands to-day before the world not only as the greatest woman, but the most important person that ever came in touch with human history.

Measured by the best standards, her character, while truly simple, almost Doric in its sweet severity, appears immeasurably great, and though claims may be made for her that some do not admit, it is nevertheless true that, practically, Mary controls in a most remarkable degree the character, the faith, we might say the destiny, of the bulk of the most enlightened portion of the human race.

Indeed, how could it be otherwise with one chosen by the Almighty to shape the early years, and consequently the human character, of the Saviour of Mankind?

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THE "HIGHER CRITIC," LIKE THE INFIDEL REGARDS MARY AS A FRAUDULENT CHARACTER.

Openly the account of the Nativity is pronounced a "myth," like the sublime story of the creation. Mary, in the hands of pseudo erudition, of Protestant professors, becomes a fraudulent character. Even as they identify Abraham with a doubtful Arab sheik, so they find the genesis of Mary in an obscure Hebrew adventuress. The "higher critic," like the professed libertine, does not recognize the true historic character, and much less the exalted purity, of the Maid of Nazareth, styled by the Council of Ephesus "the Mother of God."

Why this attempt to drag down the Virgin to their own level? It is simply because they know that Mary is inseparably connected with the Incarnation, a fact that they deny and wish to eliminate from theology. Mary stands an immovable barrier between them and the object of their ambition.

THE OBJECT IN SEEKING TO DEBASE MARY IS TO DETHRONE THE SON OF GOD.

The attack upon Mary is an attack upon the Bible and Christianity. They understand that a supernatural Child calls for a supernatural mother, and their war is with the supernatural. They intend to free the world of the supernatural as so much "superstition" to rid themselves of a supernatural Christ child they repudiate the Virgin. Yes, Mary remains to-day, in the face of false criticism, with its allies, the infidel and scandalmonger. Mary forms the indestructible foundation of the Divine Incarnation, and all Christians who have the honor of sacred truth at heart and venerate Holy Scripture should be made sensible

of the fact that the object in seeking to debase Mary is to dethrone the Son of God.

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION WILL STAND IN SIGHT OF THE ASSAULTS OF INFIDELITY AND "HIGHER CRITICISM."

Still, it was ever thus. Great characters cannot escape aspersion. The Mother of our Lord forms no exception, and she is pronounced a fiction in order to support the charge that the Incarnation is a fiction. Hence the Woman blessed above all women; the woman who has so sublimely exalted all womanhood; the woman who has given an undying inspiration to Art, Song and History; the woman who has done more than all other women combined to elevate humanity; the woman who nursed the Babe of Bethlehem and stood by the Cross of Calvary; the woman chosen from eternity to be the Mother of God's Son; this incomparable woman, in the last analysis of infidel criticism, is simply a fictitious character, constructed out of an old Galilean example of doubtful reputation, to do duty in an Oriental fable, being one of the class of women who may stand as sinners before the bar of God to be judged at the last day. This is simply an insult to universal womanhood. Pretended scholarship, could hardly go to greater lengths in formulating examples of the revolting and profane. Yet the character of Mary will stand. The Incarnation, the foundation of Christianity, will stand, and when bastard erudition has perished from the earth the Gospel Narrative will remain, and the world will clearly see that the story of the Nativity, as given by Matthew and Luke, is one altogether above the power of human genius, being superhuman in its origin and in its exhibition of spotless purity; in a word, that this story, by its internal evidence, furnishes an ample refutation of infidel slander, and in itself forms a conception that is immaculate.

SOCIETY RITUALS.

When and Where and Why They Are Prescribed by the Church—Some Facts Concerning the Relation of Catholics to Secret Societies in General.

You will confer a favor by answering in the Review the following:

I. "Are Catholics allowed to be members of the Woodmen and Royal Neighbors' societies?"

II. "Can a priest permit the said societies to attend funeral service in the church, and read their ritual service in the Catholic cemetery?"

III. "Are the Grand Army of the Republic and kindred societies allowed to read their ritual in the Catholic cemetery over one of their members?"

IV. "Is any ritual reading permitted in the cemetery outside of the Church service?"

Catholics are forbidden to be members of a society, whether it is named "Woodmen," "Royal Neighbors," or anything else, in the following cases:

I. If the constitution of such society require from its members, under oath or otherwise, absolute secrecy regarding the motives and acts done under the authority of said society. By absolute secrecy is meant the keeping of a thing from one who has a right to the knowledge of it, such as the guide of conscience who represents God's law, or a third person whose temporal or eternal interests are injured by withholding from him the means of saving himself, or the civil authorities who require such knowledge for the common good, the preservation of peace, order and prosperity of the community.

2. If the constitution of the society demand (either by oath or mere promise) from its members a blind and unconditional obedience to those who represent authority in the society. Such blind obedience involves a renouncing of one's own judgment and freedom of will, to the exercise of which every man is entitled, and which he may renounce only when the things commanded are in harmony with the divine law.

A person who promises blind obedience to the commands of a secret society deprives himself of the power to judge whether the act he is urged to perform is good or bad, and he thus absolutely renounces the free exercise of both reason and will. This no man may do, not even in a religious society, because there the vow of obedience is always clearly understood to exclude acts which are contrary to the law of God.

3. If the societies are organized for the purpose of making open or secret opposition to God's Church or against the lawful civil government. Such societies are forbidden because they destroy order, obedience and public morality, although they may have been founded from motives which mainly appeal to patriotism and a sense of liberty. The defence of liberty which neglects obedience to the law of God is sinful license.

4. If the societies have their own minister or chaplain (not ordained in the Church of God), their own (religious) ritual, and their own (religious) ceremonial, they are out of communion with the Catholic Church, and forbidden to Catholics.

Now, whether any particular society is to be classed in one or several of the above mentioned categories is not indicated by its name. The Church has indeed declared certain secret societies as excommunicated, and has mentioned these by name, because their character and object were well understood; but she has declared as forbidden (though not by name excommunicated) all secret societies whose object and character are essentially subversive of good order and religious principle.

The names of such societies cannot be a sure clue to their real character, because:

1. A society originally formed for the purpose of mutual protection, the furtherance of some common benefit, or a charitable object, may at the instigation of some influential member, change its main object or enlarge its scope of action, and thus without changing its name become a secret society, dangerous to religion and to the State.

2. A society of a given name may be a secret society in one country or district, and not in another; thus certain labor organizations in the United States may have simply the character of mutual beneficial societies, in which the members pledge themselves to stand by each other to maintain the rights of the employe against unjust measures which might be resorted to by the same societies in Canada may become secret political organizations, and this without changing their constitutions and laws, but merely by an interpretation that the pledge of secrecy is to extend to their deliberations in matters concerning politics as well as to questions regarding the hours of work, wages, exclusion and the rest.

3. A society may have different grades or branches, some of which come under the head of forbidden secret societies, whilst others are purely beneficial societies. Thus it happens that a member of an Odd Fellows' lodge finds that nothing is ever said or done in the meetings which might be construed against religion or civil obedience; he is sure that he knows it all, because he has "been a member for more than ten years." But he does not know that he belongs only to that great crowd which, by the supporting of a lucrative mutual insurance business, furnishes capital, and at the same time turns public opinion off its guard so as to support and shield the secret movers in higher places. Such societies may have two or more sets of constitutions and the common name only serves to familiarize the members of the lower grade with the beneficent character of the organization which is a convenient cloak for party transactions and gives the leaders a splendid opportunity of picking out and training members capable for the work they do in secret.

All in all, we should therefore answer the inquiries of our reverend correspondent:

I. Put the questions above enumerated to those who wish to join or have already joined the "Woodmen" or the "Royal-Neighbors." If they cannot answer the questions, let them inquire; on a matter which affects their liberty of conscience they should obtain definite assurance, given in a plain answer by the heads of the society. The constitutions of a society should make it clear whether its object and methods are lawful or not.

II. A priest may find it difficult to prevent the attendance of secular societies of whose disposition towards the Catholic religion he is doubtful; but as the official superintendent of the Catholic cemetery he can—and as a priest he is bound—to forbid the use of any ritual or ceremony except that which is prescribed by the liturgy of the Church and sanctioned by ecclesiastical usage.

III.—IV. This last-mentioned rule is of universal application, and so well defined by numerous decisions of the Holy See, that even parish societies, pious confraternities, and approved religious orders of the Church are prohibited from using any rite, ceremony (special banners and crosses in places where such emblems indicate the right of parochial precedence), or public prayer, which would suggest that these are to supply or complete the prescribed functions of the Roman Ritual.

The prohibition includes the use of certain sacred vestments which are not expressly mentioned in the Ritual as permissible, because these might indicate some official participation of its wearers in the liturgical functions of the Church. As for the national flag, the Sacred Congregation (S. OF. 3 Oct., 1887) decided only a few years ago that it may (tolerari posse) be carried in the funeral procession, behind the bier, and hence, we suppose, into the cemetery. But the fact that the same congregation expressly declared it unlawful to introduce the National flag on occasion of funerals into the Church plainly indicates that the secular representation, however noble in its sphere, has no right to assume the performance of ritual functions, which are exclusively the domain of the priesthood.—Ecclesiastical Review.

Christian faith is a grand cathedral, with divinely pictured windows. Standing without, you see no glory, nor can possibly imagine any; standing within, every ray of light reveals a harmony of unspeakable splendors.—Hawthorne.